

Halo: First Contact

by Real Teagy SOT

Category: Halo, Mass Effect

Genre: Sci-Fi, Suspense

Language: English

Characters: A. J. Johnson

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2013-03-10 17:05:55

Updated: 2013-03-21 15:44:42

Packaged: 2016-04-27 04:07:11

Rating: T

Chapters: 3

Words: 11,079

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: The year is 2525 during the golden age of Humanity. After centuries of expansion Humanity will encounter an alien intelligence and realize that no amount of preparation could have prepared them for first contact. Contact with Harvest is lost and the Human Race will dedicate itself to Interplanetary War once more. The Covenant has conquered more species into it's Empire.

1. Setting the stage

Disclaimer :I do not own Mass Effect or Halo. They belong to their respective developers. This is of my own creation and for the entertainment of the readers and myself, I do not intend to profit financially from this work.

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><p>Halo First Contact: Prologue

Human history. Containing all the recorded events that have taken place prior to the current date. Humanity had taken longer than expected to evolve from hunter-gatherers. But once the ball started to roll, it never stopped. Inside a Forerunner archive in an unknown place they had been on record as the race with the fastest rate of advancement.

True to their nature and biological programming, Humanity indeed lived up to its expectations. Making leap after leap, daring to do what no one else dared. Of course this wasn't the mind-set of each person otherwise they would have perished long ago. But their ability at succeeding against the odds had been listed as almost . . . supernatural.

In record time, breaking their previous record they had jumped from hunter-gatherers to small, tightly knit communities. Not before long they had rapidly grown into a fully fledged civilization. Doing what

would take most if not all others longer to achieve. But beside these admirable traits lies a darker nature. They seek strife with one another even if they do not know it. Once they became capable of global warfare across their cradle world, they immediately engaged in it. The first and second world wars would be prime examples of Humanity testing itself, to see if they were indeed deserving of life.

During such times great advances are made, truly remarkable in some cases. Electronics and nuclear fission, giving them the tools to give themselves a greater future, or to join the ashes from whence they came.

It was during these times of cruelty that they realized they are destined for great things, looking at the stars and yearning for a greater purpose. At the conclusion of the world wars, they set the foundation for true unification among themselves, setting rules and codes they must abide by to keep their darker nature sealed away.

Pushing higher and higher each time these amazing examples of mammalian intelligence became a space-faring species. Yet again breaking their previous records that are unknown to themselves. They became the masters of their solar system. But with no other challenge, nowhere else to turn, they released long sealed hatreds and old resentments sparking civil war throughout their domain.

Madness and Genius are two sides of the same coin. Where other species are committed to one or the other, you will never find a greater example of this saying than Humanity itself, the people who created the saying.

Testing itself yet again to push into new areas of science and warfare they became capable of interplanetary warfare, wars that span multiple worlds and capable of deciding the fate of not just their own fate, but the fate of others.

Proving that they are not ready to join the dust they achieve true unity among their species under the banner of the UNSC and the UEG. The Human race strove to prevent its own destruction, whether they knew it or not. Once they achieved a means of traveling to other solar systems at a fast pace they expanded at an uncontrollable rate, laying claim to every world they discovered still yearning to discover everything there is to know.

The most shocking revelation for the resurgent Humanity was that after expanding into hundreds of other systems and not discovering intelligent alien life, that they found evidence of its existence extremely close to home. On the other planet once capable of bearing life they discovered the remains of a research outpost which propelled them further than they could have thought, revolutionizing their own technology.

This is something that had not been predicted, Humanity is very capable of advancing on its own and faster than they deserve but to be propelled even further by remnants of a race that had arisen 50,000 years before Humanity. This would be marked as the most important discovery in their history.

Enabling them to travel even further and faster than before, their rate of expansion doubled, pushing them to create and discover more and more than they ever thought possible. Humanity began to prepare itself for the inevitable first contact with an alien intelligence.

Using slip-space and mass effect technology in unison, they reached the golden age of their civilization. The only way was up in the human mind.

How wrong they are, as each civilization now matter how advanced has the capability to die.

How wrong they are indeed.

**UEG Data Files
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** - The discovery of Prothean ruins on Mars**

In the year 2411, a signal was detected on Mars from an unknown source. UNSC science teams investigated and discovered the most important revelation in human history. That they are not alone in the universe.

After unearthing the structure they discovered that the signal was an emergency distress beacon in response to the failing reactor. After avoiding a catastrophic meltdown they discovered that it was in fact a research station. In such a close proximity to Earth only one explanation could be given which that the aliens, later discovered to be called Protheans, were observing early Humanity. This gave rise to many new questions, a few of which were the most important.

Why did they leave? Where did they go? Will they come back?

These questions could not be answered but the UNSC would not be unprepared for the eventual answers. Within several months the UNSC had committed teams to researching and developing technology using element zero. With help from the Prothean ruins it wasn't before long that results were coming in.

** - Prothean**

The Prothean species is presumed to still exist elsewhere in the galaxy. The research outpost on Mars and its contents are the only evidence found of their existence other than the Mass Relays found throughout human space.

The outpost itself is 50,000 years old but what is surprising is that it shows signs of orbital bombardment around its facility. What is also strange is that evidence of orbital bombardment has been found on many other worlds Humanity has colonized but with no signs of earlier habitation.

Many theorize that the Prothean civilization erupted into civil war and exterminated itself. This is the most commonly held belief however not actual proof. It is widely considered that Protheans are the masters of mass effect technology, however many scientists argue that they had obviously not developed slip-space drives and therefore Humanity has an advantage in that instance.

** - Mass Relay**

After years of extensive decryption, the UNSC discovered that the Protheans used Mass Relays to travel extensively throughout the galaxy. Knowing what to look for the UNSC looked for evidence of these marvelous creations.

Within a year, Mass Relays were discovered throughout human space creating a network which allowed humanity to travel within its own territory easier. The UNSC took a careful approach to this new-found FTL. Instead of blindly opening relays and giving whatever may lay on the other side a chance to rush into human space. Ships must search for and locate the other relay that links to another before activating it.

Even then the UNSC commits a risk assessment and decides whether or not it would be safe to do so. But within the local cluster of stars in the galaxy, Humanity inhabits 876 solar systems that are linked via the mass relay network. None of which push into other areas of the galaxy, rather they allow travel within their territory at an easier pace.

This has revolutionised trade and commerce allowing the outer colonies more freedom and preventing the predicted civil war before its eruption to the relief of the UNSC and the Human race.

** - Element Zero**

Alongside many other discoveries in the Prothean ruins was Element Zero or Eezo as it is commonly known. This element receiving it's name from having zero atomic mass. When scientists began to experiment with it they discovered that it was essential to the Prothean space craft.

When subjected to an electrical current, Eezo is capable of lowering the mass of an object if given a positive charge and giving more mass to an object if given a negative charge. This element is used in almost every aspect of human society.

Eezo's use in space craft is instrumental, allowing ships to travel faster in normal space but when in slip-space it is capable of shortening the travel time from Earth to Harvest (Centre of human space and edge respectively) from 12 months to just under 3 months without the use of a mass relay, of course many stops would have to be made to discharge the immense static energy created by the use of an element zero core.

The military applications of Eezo are just as extensive and revolutionary as shown by military space-craft not having to discharge the static energy created by an Eezo core.

** - Biotics**

After a few accidental shipping crashes carrying dust form element zero near population centers in human space, children exposed to element zero began to develop tumors, in most cases benign but in severe cases they were cancerous. Fortunately modern science is capable of eliminating cancerous tumors before the risk of death becomes apparent.

What came next was surprising. Many children who were unborn at the time were exposed to Element zero in trace amounts. These children developed the ability to manipulate the mass of objects around them, commonly known as biotics.

It took decades of extensive research and the development of implants to allow these individuals to harness their abilities. In the year 2468, scientists managed to create the second generation of biotic amps and allow for biotic individuals to use their abilities at a higher success rate, because of this individuals from the original exposures from 2444 were able to teach the younger generation how to use their abilities.

Surprisingly, the newer generation became more capable at a rapid pace giving birth to a new type of soldier in some cases as the UNSC did not waste their potential. Each new generation of biotic amps creates more capable biotics and new ways are being discovered of using biotics every day.

* * *

><p>Authors Note - Hello again, Real Teagy SOT here.

I don't really know what to say except i'm back and i'm sorry for abandoning my earlier stories. Before i'm asked i will not be continuing them and this story will be my focus. It's good to be back and i hope you will give this story a chance.

Onto the story, well i know this is a short prologue but i didn't want another timeline event, i mean seriously i get bloody fingers each time i write one of them. I would like to know what you think so far. I would like to state i am going to try and write this story as realistic as possible with a merging of both universes and what i think should occur and play out.

I haven't seen any other story write what i have in mind so it will be good to be the first to do it. I'm not spilling the beans just yet but some won't like it and some will (Obviously, that's life) but it is an original idea. This story will be for the UNSC's first contact with an alien intelligence and not further. It will not include Shepard or the Master Chief, they will be for a sequel story.

2. Chapter 1

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><p>Halo First Contact : Chapter One

Date: 2nd September 2524

Location: Deep space between systems

A lone cargo freighter drifted through space, heading to an unknown destination. A UNSC cargo freighter ferrying food supplies from Harvest, one of the main agricultural colonies of the UNSC. This ship however, is unmanned and in control by a high tech Virtual Intelligence (VI) and not a full crew of humans or an Artificial Intelligence (AI) to make shipping easier.

Whilst travelling in the slip-space dimension to the colony of Madrigal, a series of short circuits and overloads struck the cooling systems forcing the VI to exit slip-space and repair the problem in a safer and more stable environment.

```
/- Running Diagnostics And Systems-Wide Scan . . .
/- Structural Integrity 93.97%
/- Fuel Capacity 90.32%
/- Mass Effect Core Stability 89.32%
/- Slip-Space Drive Stability 40.22% /DANGER\
/- Coolant Sytems 48.21 And Rapidly Decreasing /DANGER\
/- Running Immiediate Repair Protocols. . . . Drones Activated
```

Now that the problem had been found and the repair drones had been activated, the VI follows the next step in the line of protocol and its programming. To determine it's exact location in relation to it's destination.

```
/- Activating All Exterior Sensors. . . .
/- Alert! Vessel Detected 124 Kilometers Away And Approaching
Rapidly
/- Unknown Vessel?
/- Searching Databases. . . .
/- Opening UEG Ship Types . . . No Match
/- Opening UNSC Ship Types . . . No Match?
/- Alert! Unknown Vessel Releasing Smaller Craft
/- Unknown Protocol Activated . . . First Contact Scenario
Initiated
/- Simulating Possible Interactions . . . Limited At This Time
/- Unknown Signal Transmitting From Home Vessel . . . Searching For
Source
/- Unknown Vessels boarding Home Vessel. . . .Activating Defensive
Drones
/- Unknown Signal Located! Attempting To Nuetrali...
/-Override Accepted
```

/ - Enter Console Command (*****)

/ - Command Accepted

/ - Initiating Contact

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Date: February 2nd 2525

Time: 04:30 am

Location: Epsilon Indi system, Harvest Colony, Gladheim Military Base

On the planet Harvest inside a Military base built to train the colonial militia, one man walked through the corridors. His steps echoing through the silent building as he made his way to a room of interest.

Now to better understand this man has himself up early in the morning of Harvest's 17 hour long day cycle to get his men as ready as possible. Under orders, he and Staff Sergeant Byrne have to get the colonial militia up to UNSCDF standards.

A target he intended to achieve as soon as possible. He turns the corner and approaches the door of choice. Above the door read "Alpha Squad Section 1". He raises his hand up to the center of the door where an orange holographic rectangle with a circle in the center waited. The holographic lock accepted his gesture and slid open to his right. He stepped in the dark room casually, making sure to make hard, loud steps in his boots as he made his way to the center.

He pulled a cigar from his combat trouser pocket and caresses it in his fingers, making sure to get a good whiff of the unfiltered and unaltered tobacco inside of the cigar. Pleased with it he took out his lighter and flicked the lid open and sparked the flame, igniting it to produce a beautiful flame. Placing the cigar in his mouth he lit the tip of the cigar and inhaled deeply to get a great sensation to help him in the early hours of the morning. Closing the lid on his lighter he placed it back in his pocket. Taking another drag of his cigar which lit up his facial features. A dark skinned man with a clean shaven face. The image disappeared as quickly as it came.

At the tap of his omni-tool, a tool which is represented by a holographic set of images which has a wide range of uses, the lights in the room switched on to, revealing the room which housed 10 soldiers sleeping in their beds, asleep in their cots.

This being the best part of the morning, with great enthusiasm the dark-skinned man opened his mouth with the intent to destroy.

"Rise and shine princesses! You've got five minutes to have a shit, shave n be outside in formation!"

Intent to destroy their morning that is.

Each recruit found themselves waking up in one of the many corners of hell, this one being governed by Staff Sergeant Johnson, the Devil

incarnate. One soldier in particular taking longer than usual to get out off bed and shake of his fatigue caught Johnson's attention.

Moving over to apprehend the victim, Johnson readied his sarcasm.

"You okay there Houldey?" Johnson's voice tickling the ear of said private.

"Uhg" was all Houldey could reply as he lazily attempted to sit up.

"How about me and the rest of alpha squad let you have a rest today eh?" suggests Johnson leaving the bait out in the open.

"Really?" replies Houldey with disbelief, in his american accent "You'd do that?"

"Now, do I really look like a sucker to you?" asks Johnson as he stands up to reveal the room to Houldey, to which his room mates are almost dressed in their combats already.

Johnson took another drag of his cigar and puffed the smoke into Houldey's face and moved to leave the room. "Any later than 4:35 and your all runnin' round the camp before breakfast" said Johnson with even more enthusiasm than before as he left to enter the opposite room.

Private Houldey starts getting dressed as he hears Johnson in the other room waking those poor bastards up.

"Just another day in the Corps. . ." mutters Houldey to himself.

Sergeant Johnson walks up and down the other room with his cigar in hand.

"Alright, sweethearts what are you waiting for? Breakfast in bed? It's another glorious day in the corps! A day in the Marine Corps is like a day on the farm. Every meal's a banquet! Every paycheck a fortune! Every formation a parade! I LOVE the Corps!" Johnson's speech brings a smile to every marine who can here his enthusiastic speech.

"Hoorah!" Chorus' through the rooms.

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Age: 23rd Age of Doubt

Location: On-board the Covenant Vessel Minor Transgression, Entering an Unknown System

The Minor Transgression is a Kig-Yar privateer vessel. Such vessels are built by the Kig-Yar, who use them to aid their pirate like nature. Such vessels are fast and deadly for raiding lone merchant and cargo ships. However, such ships are often employed by the Ministry of Tranquility who pay the Kig-Yar vast sums of money if they discover any Forerunner reliics out on the borders of Covenant

space.

This helps to give the ships a more useful existence to the Covenant by exploring unknown space and furthering the goals of the Great Journey, to which the Kig-Yar are indifferent to. This ship is under the command of Ship-mistress Chur'R-Yar, a well known pirate and raider who has been employed by the Covenant for many years. She takes great credit in her ability to command her crew through the promise of wealth, one she isn't very honest about fulfilling.

Chur'R-Yar, like the other females of her species, is smaller in size to the male counterparts. She enjoys this as many would not think much of her but many have learned to not underestimate her, the hard way. She takes pride in her vessel and what she has accomplished. Through her command, the ship has managed to earn enough money to install another pulse laser cannon bringing the amount up to three.

Recently however, after raiding an unknown ship months prior she has found a new sense of determination and lust for wealth. The ship she had raided belonged to an unknown race. When her crew boarded the ship they were met by security mech's of some sort. Her crew made short work of them but at the loss of 4 of her own crew. The food products raided proved to be of a levo-acid base and therefore edible to the majority of the Covenant, including her own crew who had enjoyed what they raided.

If this species is not known to the rest of the Covenant, she may be able to raid a few more ships and remain undetected and acquire a greater deal of knowledge which can be sold to various people alongside goods which will no doubt be sought after by some races within the Covenant. She and her crew could only enjoy this bounty until the Covenant discover this new species and incorporate them or enslave them, depending on their usefulness.

The data-files acquired from the unknown vessel gave it's previous port away in the deep black sea of space. A system which her ship had just entered. The planet itself is a garden world capable of supporting life for the majority of the Covenant. As she looked out of the window of her vessel at the planet known as "Harvest" she readied herself for protocol.

With a series of reptilian growls and chirps she orders her crew to perform appropriately.

"Activate the Luminary, we need to know if anything is of great value in this system" she ordered

After waiting momentarily for the Luminary to activate she is given incredible news.

"Ship-mistress! There is another cargo transport of the same design as the last . . . filled with Forerunner artifacts!" exclaims the Luminary Operator known as Zhar

A Luminary is in fact a Covenant reverse-engineered version of the Forerunner equivalent. It scans and identifies areas to locate Forerunner artifacts for "Reclamation" by the Covenant. A Luminary is required on every Covenant vessel.

"You know what the penalty is for lying don't you Zhar?" asks Chur'R-Yar with a wave of her hand in his direction.

Zhar turns to Chur'R-Yar and bows his head.

"Ofcourse Ship-mistress, but I do not deceive you, you may look at the results yourself" Zhar offers as he respectfully moves to the side to allow her a view.

She shakes her head as the rest of the bridge crew watches in terror for Zhar. If he is purposely trying to aggravate her, he will be castrated. This would not be done with painkillers or even in the clean medical room, it would be a punishment in which the crew would be made to watch as he is mutilated with dirty tools. Stepping up to the console she leans over the computer screen with intense interest.

What she saw was amazing and they hadn't even got close to the planet yet. The vessel was filled with Forerunner artifacts. Such a treasure would bring her and her crew great wealth. But perhaps not all of the relics have to be found?

"Zhar" she says aloud, instilling caution in everyone "I commend you on your find, well done" She leans in to whisper in his ear "I'm glad that you won't be losing your manhood anytime soon"

Zhar bows happily, knowing that he and his scrotum will remain close. After all how is he supposed to mate with the Ship-mistress if it is gone?

"That vessel is filled with Forerunner artifacts!" she says pointing out of the bridge window. "Now, we have a choice. We can either alert the Ministry of Tranquility . ." To which a few gave nods, approving of this action. "Or we can raid them and take what we deserve, only a fraction will be given to the Ministry and we would be rich!"

To this the entire crew agreed unanimously with barks and growls of approval.

"It is clear then, set a course for interception and jam their communications" she orders as she moves to leave the room and gear up. "Prepare the boarding parties and the umbilical"

With a short few commands into their ship's computers, the unfortunate vessel is now helpless.

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Location: Gladshiem Military Base, Harvest

Back in the Gladshiem Military Base, a certain Staff Sergeant Johnson is preparing his platoon for a training exercise. He has pushed them very hard to get them done faster but at a financial gain. You see, Staff Sergeant Johnson and Staff Sergeant Byrne made a bet at whose group would win the exercise. After all a little competitiveness never hurt anyone.

Did it?

Avery Johnson himself is putting on his issued armour and equipping a training rifle. The old BDU's back before the discovery of the Prothean ruins were great, he had after all tried them on and trained in them as per training in the event they are to be used. But thanks to those ruins which sparked many other developments, himself and every other UNSC soldier in existence is issued a hardsuit set of armour for a BDU.

It offered greater protection and advanced medical systems and integrated computer system to boot. It increased the average Infantryman's efficiency and effectiveness greatly. The on-board Biofoam dispensers are able to keep a soldier in the fight. The kinetic barrier systems allow soldiers to fight for longer and harder than before and the new weapon systems are just as impressive. Thanks to Johnson's highly classified career he is privy to prototype weapons at times. Unfortunately today is not one of them as he would love to break out an MA76 Smartgun on the training field. Just to show the runts how it's was done back in those days, those highly classified and increasingly dangerous days.

At the time it scared the shit out of Johnson, being sent in to take out a rebel base alongside the others of his classified program. All geared up and given some experimental new toys to try out. Surrounded by rebels and nowhere to go? Why go anywhere when you have a Smartgun capable of gunning down everything in your path? Alongside a squad of the most highly trained killers in existence.

That was then though and this is now. Focusing on the present Johnson finishes gearing up and regroups with his platoon in the Red base of the training grounds. The training ground is symmetrical, with a base on one side and everything provided is mirrored for the opposite side. A lot is riding on this exercise, not just the bet but also who is the best platoon here. 30 soldiers under Johnson's command and 30 soldiers under Byrne's command. Each team had a mix of full combat specialists alongside other types of specialists.

Everything is perfectly safe in this exercise, no chance of an actual casualty, but alongside the Platoons facing each other there will be various other obstacles in place for them. With each team inside the center of their respective bases to make it fair, Johnson and Byrne met outside, in the middle of the training grounds.

Johnson strolls up to Byrne who is standing there in full gear and a fully sealed helmet. Johnson himself wearing not a helmet, but a standard Sergeant's cap with the UNSC Symbol emblazoned upon his forehead.

Placing his cigar into his mouth and chomping down onto it, Byrne speaks first.

"Johnson"

"Byrne"

Byrne looks around at the grounds and then at the sky.

"Helluva day huh?" says Byrne, his voice properly coming through his helmet speakers alongside his very clear British accent.

"We talkin' bout the weather now? Damn, I must be instillin' the fear

into you today Byrne" replies Johnson as he looks into Byrnes polarized visor.

"Fear? Fear puts a man on edge, keeps him alive." replies Byrne shifting his feet as he does "We both know that Johnson"

"Yeah well, some of us are less lady like than others" cracks Johnson

"Ha, that's a good one. But we'll see who's lady like at the end when you owe me 300 credits" replies Byrne, crossing his arms as he does.

"Sure whatever, let's get this show on the road. I'm lookin' forward to drinkin' your tea and eatin' your biscuits after I raid you pathetic excuse of a base" jabs Johnson at Byrne's ethnicity in a friendly way.

"Whoa!" exclaims Byrne, raising his hands to stop Johnson's incredible offensive. He then directs his finger at Johnson "Nobody takes my digestives Johnson, Nobody!"

They stare at each other for a few brief seconds before they burst into a little jolt of laughter. After reaffirming their grip on the present situation, they gripped each others hands and shook firmly.

"Good luck Johnson, you're gonna need it" says Byrne as he starts to walk back to his base.

"Ha, the day I need luck to win is the day I resign" replies Johnson as he jogs over to his base.

"Better get signing that dotted line then . . ." mutters Byrne

As Johnson did, he readied himself for . . . the battle.

Walking into the center of the base where his team stood ready for him in a circle around the Red Base Flag, which upon is emblazoned the UNSC insignia. All his men waited for the timer to count down and the exercise to start, each preparing their own unique skills for the mock battle to come.

Johnson walked up and down the center of the group and began to talk.

"Men, keep your eyes down range, fingers on your triggers n we'll all go home in one piece" says Johnson as he looks around in a glare that instills discipline.

"Am I right Marines!?" Johnson demands to know.

"Sir! Yes Sir!" each Marine in Alpha Platoon answered.

An alarm rings out and a synthesized voice springs into action.

"Exercise has begun, preparing scoreboards"

"Damn right I'm right! Now move it out! Double time!" orders Johnson

as he pulls back the loading chamber, priming his training rifle ready to fire, alongside a double dozen other clicks and the thunderous sound of boots on concrete.

And the battle commences.

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Location: Covenant Holy City - High Charity

Deep in the purple nebula that resides at the heart of the Covenant Empire sat the largest space station in the galaxy. An enormous mushroom-shaped structure that is 350 km in length and 150 in diameter.

On board the colossal space station known as High Charity, in the Higher sections of the station where the people of higher stature live and work, a San 'Shyuum by the name of Ord Casto worked day and night to ensure he could achieve something with his life, worthy of the Forerunners.

Ord Casto belongs to the Ministry of Fortitude. This organisation works to ensure that Forerunner technology and relics are distributed evenly throughout the Covenant and all of it's member species. This is no easy task due to the gigantic proportion of the Covenant and it's empire, tracking and distributing such technology is a nightmare. Many exchange hands multiple times without decent records which leads to a large investigation as to where they had gone.

Tracking the relics of the Forerunners between the many different species and all of their territories is not for the faint of heart as Ord Casto had learned. The man he replaced had died early from the stress of managing the Ministry of Fortitude and also tracking the artifacts alongside his agents.

Ord Casto is in fact the newly appointed Minister of Fortitude, a role he hopes to succeed in his political career. But as his predecessor had found out it is a stressful job and one not helped by the politics constantly at play.

Surprisingly, the door to his workstation opened and in came another San 'Shyuum who, by his gravity throne's required sharing of power to two other gravity thrones, must be a Vice Minister. How odd that the other two thrones are empty however.

"Noble Minister of Fortitude I humbly request your presence" says the Vice Minster with a bow of his head.

"You may approach and to what . . do I owe the pleasure of this meeting?" asks Fortitude (Ord Casto)

"I have important information that if privy to any other person may not be used as effectively for the good of the Covenant" replies the Vice Minister

This grabs half of Fortitude's attention.

"Really? And who are you to declare this information so. . . important?" asks Fortitude, hoping to get his name and what he wants

into the open.

"Ah forgive me, I am the Vice Minister of Tranquility" replies Tranquility with another bow to emphasize his sincere apologies.

"So I assume that given your Ministry, you have found some sort of Forerunner Reliquary?"

"I'm not sure, as you are aware my Ministry employs numerous privateer vessels to scout the edges of Hegemony space to locate Forerunner artifacts and report back to us so we may begin in haste to decipher their meaning" informs Tranquility.

"Yes I am aware,. So what is it you have found?" asks Fortitude as he closes his terminal to focus on Tranquility, ensuring his door is locked to allow no unwanted ears a chance to learn something they shouldn't.

"Well, an Unggoy loyal to me has just informed me that the vessel Minor Transgression has discovered a new species and the planet they inhabit is riddled with Forerunner relics!" exclaims Tranquility in a moment of uncontrollable joy

"Will you be quiet! We do not need addition ears on this subject" barks Fortitude, he takes a moment to regain his calm composure.
"What of this new species?"

"Unknown at the moment, the Kig-Yar are proceeding to raid vessels under their control which were outbound from the system" replies Tranquility

Fortitude's mind explodes at this information. He has after all taken great care to ensure each race within the Covenant receives roughly equal treatment. But another race that has attained space flight before intervention from the Covenant.

They could quite possibly own territory as vast as the Covenant or as little as the Unggoy, a completely unknown civilization for the time being. It's not surprising however that the Kig-Yar have proceeded to raid them but they should have known to report back least these newcomers learn about the Covenant.

"How would we use this information to great effect?" asks Fortitude

"Well as I'm aware, you have been receiving messages from an unknown source with information detailing the . . . affairs . . of a certain Prophet" baits Tranquility

"You are my informant?" Fortitude asks, taking a leap of logic.

"Exactly my good Minister. If we order the Jiralhanae ship, Rapid Conversion under the command of Chieftain Maccabeus, we may move to further increase our political influence if we discover the Forerunner Reliquary first" says Tranquility, hoping to gain the trust of Fortitude. "And remove a certain few Prophets from their position"

This is an interesting prospect. As Tranquility had been notifying

him through his messages, Prophet of Restraint has impregnated a concubine and she won't permit an abortion. This is against the breeding laws of the San 'Shyuum as Restraint is a celibate and therefore not allowed to breed. A very interesting turn of events.

"I see the benefit this would give the Covenant under our joint leadership" starts Truth as he moves around his room in his hover chair, pacing almost "After all, if the Hierarchs cannot defend themselves then how can they be expected to lead the Covenant?"

"Precisely, but we must move quickly or this opportunity would be lost forever to us" reminds Tranquility, closing behind Fortitude to squeeze an answer.

After a few tense moments had passed, Fortitude provides his answer.

"Send the word, ensure that this Reliquary comes to us, we cannot allow a potential member species to gain an advantage" replies Fortitude "Today Tranquility, we embark upon our own little journey. Let us meet with the Prophet of Restraint and . . . broker a peaceful transition"

They both smile, knowing that unsuspectingly they have both found an ally capable as capable as themselves.

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UEG Data Files

- Harvest

Founded in 2468, the agricultural planet of Harvest is indeed one of the outermost and yet one of the largest providers of food to the entirety of human controlled space. It has seven orbital elevators across its surface and has a sizable population of 425,000 colonists.

Worlds such as Harvest are known as "Bread basket worlds".

Recently, many unmanned cargo transports have been reported missing or disappearing.

- Virtual Intelligence (VI)

Virtual intelligence's have been in use since some time in the 21st century, early in the colonization of Sol, before the development of the Slip-space drive and the discovery of the Prothean ruins. Virtual intelligence's perform many tasks that would take a human a longer time frame to complete. These roles range from data processing and information gathering, to running automated systems at an incredible performance rate.

VI's are not self-aware.

The Military applications for this technology have been in use by the UNSC since it's inception.

- Artificial Intelligence(AI)

Late in the 21st century scientists experimenting with VI technology at the time accidentally created an Artificial Intelligence. The scientists were attempting to improve the already useful VI systems to operate at an increased capacity, efficiency and effectiveness. By providing more processing power, alongside a great wealth of other complex systems the first AI was born on Luna (Earth's Moon) inside a UN training facility.

Most Human AI's give themselves an avatar to represent their personality or core function.

There are two types of AI, "Dumb" and "Smart".

"Smart" AIs are created by mapping a human brain and using it as a "template" for the construct. They are capable of intuition, learning, and making logical leaps that ordinary computer programs cannot. They can also "feel" genuine emotions, such as affection, anger and amusement. They have a normal operational life span of about seven years, after which they descend into rampancy.

"Dumb" AI's are not created using human brains, but are simply highly advanced computer constructs. They cannot learn anything that is outside of their set limits of dynamic memory processing matrix. They are quite useful in their particular field of expertise, but very limited. Dumb AI's can function and learn as long as they are active, and are not subject to the effects of rampancy experienced by aging "smart" AI's.

3. Chapter 2

****Disclaimer: ****I do not own Mass Effect or Halo. They belong to their respective developers. This is of my own creation and for the entertainment of the readers and myself, I do not intend to profit financially from this work.

Halo First Contact : Chapter Two

Location: UNSC Training Grounds, Outskirts of Gladsheim

Staff Sergeant Avery Junior Johnson makes his way out of his base, Red Base. His very intent is to destroy Blue Team and capture their flag. Against his comrade who holds the same rank as himself, Staff Sergeant Nolan Byrne leads Blue Team with the same intent as Johnson. Both vying to prove to the other who is the most capable at training and leading their respective Platoon's. The deciding factor to this exercise is who has the better plan and who implements it the best.

A plan. Oh Johnson has a plan all right.

The training grounds are symmetrical, meaning both sides mirror the other perfectly. A single base at either side that are two floors tall. Two entrances at either base on their left and right sides, both defended with many sets of cover to be used by either team. At halfway through the grounds is a little pedestal with a command console protected by hard casing. The console itself allows a single group of VI operated drones to enter the exercise and aid the team

who activated it. Deadly if used at the right time, useless if they are put under coordinated fire. At the top of either base is a sniper rifle, modified alongside all the training weaponry it fires concussive rounds just like the rest.

All of these things could go perfect if used properly, ensuring the defeat of Blue Team.

Moments prior Johnson had ordered Corporal Kirkham to retrieve the Sniper on the roof and await for his signal to attack. Kirkham's job in this exercise is to provide precision support, eliminate highlighted targets and take out the enemy sniper.

Alongside these orders to Corporal Kirkham, he also gave orders to Corporal Blackmoore to take her group up the left side as Johnson will go up the right with enough men. Hopefully they could pull off a small pincer movement to secure the Drone console.

The sunlight rises up Johnson's body as he exits Red Base and into the fray. He charges forward to some cover on the right side. The men who follow him are Jenkins, Houlday, Forsell, Poole, McReynolds, Downs, Simms, Petrovsky and Bowen. Just as they get into cover, fire from Blue Team erupts onto their cover, suppressing them into staying down and showing no signs of letting up just yet.

3 . . 2 . . 1 . . - Johnson counted in his head.

"Now!" Johnson pops out of cover taking aim and letting loose his trigger finger onto the enemy position alongside his men.

The few soldiers of Blue Team who are engaging them are of the same number and most likely have the same idea as them. But for now they are pressed into cover or they will be taken out for the count.

"You two!" Johnson points at Poole and Bowen "Move it up!"

They both step out of cover taking great care to not get themselves shot they proceed rapidly forward. Johnson returns to suppressing the enemy. A glare catches his eye from the top of Blue Base, an all too familiar glare.

"Get down!" Bellows Johnson as he grabs Houlday and drags him into cover with him.

A loud crack echoes across the battlefield as everyone dives into cover. Johnson takes a quick look from behind cover and can see that the shot from the sniper hit its target. Private Forsell is now enveloped in a kinetic barrier and his weapons are all disabled as per training ground rules. Forsell now has to exit the battlefield and spectate from the tower behind Red Base. Forsell walks off with his head held low showing his shame.

Johnson sets his gaze upon the enemy sniper and putting two fingers to his ear he intends to destroy him/her.

"Kirkham!?" says Johnson

"Sergeant?" came the reply through the radio.

"Are you in position yet?" asks Johnson as he performs a hand signal

to Houldey beside him.

"Yes Sergeant, just give the word" came the answer

"Now!" bellows Houldey as he pops out of cover to suppress the enemy sniper.

The rest of Johnson's group do the same and suppress the other troops nearby.

"As soon as you have a clear shot take it" orders Johnson, he then rolls over his cover and slides into the next set of cover pieces.

Johnson soaks in as much of the battlefield as he can, the individual sounds of each rifle firing, each footstep taken and even the sound of the enemy sniper snapping out of cover to aim. Corporal Kirkham rolls out of cover in a prone position and takes a deep breath to help steady the aim of his rifle and takes the perfect shot he has been trained to achieve.

The round sails through the air rapidly and slams into the enemy sniper.

"Tango eliminated" came the words from Kirkham, giving Johnson all the help he needs.

Johnson pops out of cover again, this time taking aim expertly and firing in short controlled bursts at three distinct Blue Team soldiers preventing him and his group from advancing. Within moments they too were out of the exercise. They were dropped in less than two seconds. Johnson and his men sprint forward to claim the available cover, shortening the gap between them and the Drone console.

Additional fire catches them by surprise as a group of soldiers from Blue Team flank Johnson's exposed side.

"Cover the Sergeant!" shouts Jenkins as they all shoulder their rifles and open fire, giving him enough time to get into better cover.

But unfortunately, Houldey has exposed himself too much and gets downed by a controlled burst of fire from the opposite side of the Drone console. Houldey is inches away from Johnson. Johnson looks up to see the soldier responsible. He should have guessed really, no one other than Byrne himself who waves sheepishly as if nothing had happened and then dives into cover out of sight just as quickly as he had shown himself.

The speakers around the grounds roars to life.

"Blue Team Casualties 12"

Good! 12 out of 30 leaving 18 left. Thought Johnson.

"Red Team Casualties 15"

Shit! How in the hell did that happen!?

"Corporal Blackmoore!?" says Johnson as he raises his fingers to his ear.

" . . . Private Benti, Blackmoore got hit Sarge" replies Benti

"Private, get who ever is left with you over to the Drone console. I'll meet you there. Over" orders Johnson "Kirkham, give our boys some cover would ya?"

"Copy that" replies Kirkham

Immediately after Kirkham's reply, a series of shots rang out. Moving in order, Johnson and his group moved away from the ambush made by the Blue Team and closer to the console. Unknowingly, either side has set up symmetrical to the other with what forces they have left. All encircling the console perimeter, waiting for the others to make the move into open ground. Blue Team has more men but Red team still has it's sniper.

Things just got a lot more interesting.

"I'm going for the controls, cover me!" shouts Johnson over the firefight.

"Covering fire!"

"Protect the Sergeant!"

As Johnson exited his cover he dashed forward in a sprint, not intending to fire his rifle so he could get maximum speed. Just as he gets four metres from the target he notices Byrne doing the exact same thing. But as two Blue Team troopers step out of cover to provide support, they get quickly downed by suppressing fire. Johnson slides into cover and props himself up on the cover, aiming directly at Byrne and he opens fire.

Byrne expertly slides into some nearby cover, only capable of protecting him if he's prone.

"Jenkins! Get your ass over here!" orders Johnson as he provides cover fire for said marine.

Within moments Jenkins is right beside him catching his breath from the sprint.

"Cover me while I upload the codes" orders Johnson

Johnson activates his omni-tool and begins uploading the command code. After a minute or so of intense code typing, Johnson succeeds and the console highlights indicating a 15 second timer before they are on the exercise. Pleased that he will be able to end the exercise soon he shoulders his rifle and peeks over cover, only to be shot at, pushing him back into cover.

Johnson looks around his remaining group, seeing that he only has a remainder of six troopers left not including himself. Johnson nods to Jenkins, signalling the time to strike. They both stand up to aim from their cover, but Jenkins is forced down to the ground with concentrated fire. He is out of the game and leaving Johnson in the

centre without support.

Not giving Johnson enough time to analyse the situation, Byrne leaps into action catching Johnson by surprise. Byrne having closed the gap between them and moving in for a close range elimination. Johnson rises to the occasion and blocks Byrne's fist expertly and provides a swift jab to the gut and followed up by a tackle to the ground.

The timer hits 00:01 for the drones to enter but before they can the speakers boom to life once again.

"Alert! Exercise Terminated by Lieutenant Commander Al-Cygni. Staff Sergeant Johnson And Staff Sergeant Byrne Please Report To Her Immediately"

"You lucky bastard" mutters Johnson to Byrne.

Johnson gets up from on top of Byrne and starts to walk away, pulling out another cigar and lighting it in his mouth.

"Haha oh man. You almost had me that time" says Byrne as he catches up to Johnson.

"Funny cus I didn't see you in the better position there" cuts back Johnson

"What ya mean? Take a look around" says Byrne as he raises his arms and showcases the training grounds.

Johnson takes notice of how his men had been surrounded and almost annihilated. But at the same time notices that they would have been exposed to the drones. Johnson laughs at Byrne, the fact he thought he was about to win.

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Location: Covenant Holy City, High Charity, Higher District

The Minister of Fortitude and Vice Minister of Tranquility have made their way across one side of High Charity's Higher District to the opposite side in a manner of minutes. Intent on meeting with the High Prophet of Restraint. Fortitude had already sent a message to Restraint, requesting a private audience with information vital to his station. Very true, but not the whole truth as to their intentions.

After being dropped off at the landing pad a floor lower, Fortitude was forced to witness some of the more cruel aspects of the Covenant, cruel but necessary aspects. Seeing slave races such as the Unggoy labor to clean and build is not a comfortable sight. Their slave masters, such individuals coming from races like the Kig-Yar or even the Jiralhanae regularly beat them to keep them working efficiently. This is still up for much debate, as Fortitude himself has argued many times that surely, by beating them you are reducing their efficiency even if you are instilling discipline.

Rising up through the gravity lift to the High Prophet's residence, they witnessed a sight that not many of the Covenant has had the privilege of. Many dignitaries and ambassadors have come and gone to discuss private matters surely. But these incidences are far and few

between. Two sets of rows, parallel to each other, of Honour Guardsmen which is a Sangheili specific role. No other race has the Honour of being the Prophet's protectors as the Sangheili are a founding member and the leading race in military power and authority.

The Honour Guards all bow their heads and place their right hand over one of their hearts in respect to Fortitude and Tranquility. An Honour that humbles even the most racist of San'Shyuum. As they reach the door, it slides open revealing the beauty of the residence that each High Prophet in history has enjoyed. Truly remarkable and beautiful to all who behold it. As they enter the main door, the Prophet they intend to speak to turns the corner in his Gravity Throne, the most expensive, decorative and powerful one of it's kind.

Fortitude bows and signals for Tranquility to do the same, snapping him out of his stupor.

"Ah, the great Minister of Fortitude" Restraint says in his ageing voice, making sure to bestow disgust in the so called greatness of Fortitude "And who is this?"

Tranquility looks to Fortitude for approval, which he receives.

"I am the Vice Minister of Tranquility your grace" he responds, trying to be as graceful himself.

"Ah, I have heard much about you. Interesting that you pick this one" indicating at Fortitude "as your company"

Fortitude's anger swells inside. For Restraint has been his enemy on many occasions, for reasons mostly unknown to Fortitude himself. During each debate and argument Fortitude has presented in the High Council chambers, Restraint has personally sought to humiliate and ridicule Fortitude on each occasion. Failing that ensuring his work got a lot more difficult. Much to the anger and resentment of Fortitude.

"Now, what is this information that is of the most importance?" asks Restraint, putting his fingers together in an interlocking manner in front of him.

"Well as I stated in my message, this would be best if we discussed it alone" replies Fortitude, trying his best not to disrespect the High Prophet, lest he be executed. "What we have discovered is important to you and the foundations of the Covenant itself"

"And why should I believe you?" asks Restraint expectantly

They almost fumble over themselves but Fortitude takes the lead.

"If this information is deemed useless, we will resign from our respective positions and allow someone more competent to take our place." declares Fortitude, leaving the bait that he knows Restraint cannot pass up.

This does however startle Tranquility however, unnoticeable as he controls his emotions.

"Very well we shall proceed to my personal quarters however" replies Restraint "If it is indeed useless, you will be executed" says Restraint, directing his finger to Fortitude "And you shall also" Restraint indicates to Tranquility.

Restraint smiles, knowing that he could get rid of these two fools at once.

"Agreed" snaps Fortitude in an instant, catching Restraint's hatred.

"Very well, let us discuss this information elsewhere"

A few minutes later, in the privacy of Restraint's quarters. . .

After the door is closed and all Honour Guards have been dismissed from the other side of the door, they begin.

"So" starts Restraint as he begins to pour a drink of wine into an expensive glass "What is this information you deem worthy of risking your neck over?"

"Well, if your look here on these data pads" replies Tranquility as he hovers over to hand them to Restraint "This holds all the necessary information that we have come to provide"

"Did I give you permission to approach me boy?" Restraint asks, with an underlying threatening message.

Tranquility quickly moves back once he has handed them over "No your grace"

Restraint lazily looks over the data pads but his attention is grabbed once he reads key parts in the writings.

"You! You Dare?!" barks Restraint as he knocks over the wine bottle and glass in his sudden outburst.

"I dare what exactly?" shoots back Fortitude "Retaliate against what has been decades of constant humiliation from you?"

"I have lead this Covenant through times of great peril and need! You would dare to blackmail me into stepping down and naming . . _you . . _as my successor!?" barks Restraint, his older voice giving way during his rage.

"Yes we dare you old bastard" shoots Tranquility in an unexpected strike "This is, after all a game of thrones isn't it? And you either win . . or you lose once you play. There is no middle-ground"

Fortitude smiles knowing his new-found ally, though young by San'Shyuum standards has quite a bite. Restraint takes a moment to acknowledge the situation, to soak in and process all this information and the likely outcome of each and every scenario.

"And what is stopping me from just killing you here and now?" asks Restraint

"We have an information broker who will release the information should we perish any time soon" replies Tranquility.

"Of course you would" responds Restraint " I . . . I have led this Covenant greatly and now I am forced to . . . _recede_" the disgust ever present in his voice, alongside an undertone of defeat. "You're both very fortunate I enjoy living" Restraint takes a deep breath.

"Well?" asks Fortitude

"I will get to work immediately, I do not want to lose my head any time soon" Restraint takes another deep breath "Go, leave me in peace for whatever time I have left as High Prophet"

Restraint taps a button signalling the door to open and income a pair of Sangheili Honour Guards.

"Escort these two of the premises and safely to their destination." orders Restraint, bringing him great pain to say these words he utters "Make sure no harm comes to them and use my personal Phantom"

A few minutes later, upon boarding said Phantom the pilot awaits their orders.

"Take us to the God's relic in the centre of the city" orders Fortitude

"What? Why?" asks Tranquility.

"We need the blessing of the Oracle if we are to succeed in our mission" replies Fortitude, taking care not to reveal anything to the others nearby and their own escort.

"Yes . . . that makes sense" replies Tranquility "Onward, to the holy relic!" orders Tranquility.

The Phantom takes off and with great speed, heads directly for the Forerunner Dreadnought in the centre of the city. All is falling into place it seems.

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Location: Orbit of Harvest, On board a Merchant Vessel

Staff Sergeant Johnson had been given new orders effective immediately after the exercise he and Byrne were conducting. Lieutenant Commander Jilan Al-Cygni, a Naval Intelligence officer in control of both Johnson and Byrne had been told to train the local militia up into UNSCDF standards. So far they have succeeded and alongside some new gear brought for defense purposes their job is now done.

However, LC Al-Cygni has discovered that a vessel leaving the system earlier today has been raided and left adrift in space, by what she isn't sure but she intends to draw out whoever it is and she has a good idea just who it is. Either Pirates or Insurrectionist scum. Neither are particularly good news but this presents her with an opportunity to prove her worth and gather Intel on where they are

operating from.

That is the reason she is now commandeering a merchant freighter alongside Johnson and Byrne with their Platoons. She intends to get into orbit and fake an emergency distress beacon. Now the Insurrectionists would definitely not risk being discovered unless the prize is worth it and that is the reason for boarding the largest known merchant freighter class.

Such a prize, no Pirate or Innies would pass it up.

Just escaping Harvest' gravity well, Al-Cygni activated her radio. Jilan Al-Cygni is a black-skinned woman who has the most perfect ass, in Johnson's opinion and has a strict but fair approach to her command role. Her beauty is not wasted in her position as many times she has used it to her advantage such as gaining entrance to a secure facility under Insurrectionist control.

"Staff Sergeants, Report!" she orders.

"Staff Sergeant Byrne here, my men are just setting up now ma'am"

"Staff Sergeant Johnson here, my men were ready five minutes ago ma'am"

Jilan laughed but not loud enough for it to be heard by the others on the radio. The competitiveness between these two never ceased to amaze her. But as she noticed and Johnson confessed, lately it has just been because Johnson has taken a liking to Jilan.

"Ready five minutes ago . . what are you twelve Johnson!?" replies Byrne

"Yeah twelve years older than you jackass" responds Johnson, his smoking can be heard through the radio

Jilan looked around the bridge, seeing the four other soldiers operating the ship working away with shit-eating grins as they listened to their respective Staff Sergeants at it again. They continued to bicker as Jilan read the sensory systems and anticipated the arrival of the prey.

"You're just pissed Blue Team had your pants down aren't ya?" laughs Byrne

"Decrease speed to drift and release the beacon" orders Jilan to the bridge operators.

"Yes ma'am" came the stern reply.

After a few brief moments of fingers hitting consoles, the Ship decelerated and released the beacon on all frequencies.

"Ha as if! You were about to taste my balls Byrne!" laughs Johnson at the absurdity of Byrne's claim.

A screen pings next to Jilan indicating a vessel has been detected within the 150,000 km range of the vessels scanners. Rapidly approaching and it's vector means it was hiding behind the systems

gas giant. Possibly refueling.

"All right listen up!" orders Jilan through the ships comm systems
"The target is approaching and will be on top of us in a few moments
at it's rate of speed."

"Unknown vessel detected, searching UEG databases for ship model"
said a synthesised voice in the bridge.

"Once the vessel is close enough we will jam it's transmissions" says
Jilan pleased with herself at the trap working

"UEG databases dismissed, searching UNSC databases . . ."

"Ma'am, the vessel is coming into view now dead ahead" alerts one of
the bridge crew.

"UNSC databases dismissed"

The vessel rapidly came into view, growing from a little dot and into
a strange looking vessel of a purple colour. Instilling fear into
each of the bridge crew and Jilan herself about what this actually
is.

"Vessel is of unknown make and design . . . protocol indicates
possible first contact scenario"

Those words screamed into everyone's head on the bridge
crew.

First. Contact. Scenario.

The alien ship moved alongside the freighter and halted and a few
openings on it's side opened up.

"This is not a drill! I repeat this is not a drill! We are in a first
contact scenario, Sergeants prepare to repel boarders!" orders Jilan
as she picks up her SMG and speeds out of the room towards the
defenders.

Just as she leaves however, three tubes extend from the alien vessel
and one after the other cut into the front of the freighter with
expert precision as no atmosphere is lost to
space.

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Johnson is not an easy man to scare. He has fought in many battles
across many different fronts against the Insurrectionists. He has
been a part of major offensives, assassination attempts and even mass
orbital deployment. Killed countless men and women who thought of the
UNSC as a dictatorship. Killed other human beings even though his
religion dictates he should not do so.

He hasn't felt fear in a long time, for fear comes from the unknown
and not much is unknown to Johnson but, whatever that vessel he is
staring at is it scares the shit out of him. It is definitely
unknown, it's too curvy to be a human vessel and sure as hell screams
_fear me! _Into his head.

Falling back on his classified training, Johnson readies himself for the worst as he watches the tubes cut through the freighter and into the cargo hold. He and his men all readying their rifles at the smoke that came from the intrusion. A dozen rifles prime to fire at the same time, each rifle hugging the shoulder of the soldier wielding it. The Soldier's cheek hugging the rifle as they aim down their sights at something completely unknown to them.

An alien walks out of the smoke alongside it's comrades, they are of equal size and carry what looks like a rifle, each of them. They realise that they have a dozen different weapons trained on them alone.

"Stop right there!" orders Johnson, not that they will understand him or maybe they would seen as though these must have been responsible for at least a dozen different ships disappearing.

They do stop, clearly taken by surprise. One of them growls and raises it's rifle. The others follow suit. Without hesitation, Johnson opens fire with his prototype rifle, the XBR55.

"Open fire!" orders Johnson.

Rounds smash through their flesh and down them in a fashion similar to a firing squad, quite literally. The aliens scream in pain as they are thrown to the ground by the force of the rounds fired.

"Hold fire!" orders Johnson as he lets the smoke clear a little more.

Johnson realises he may have just made first contact a mess. But the aliens boarded the vessel first did they not? And raise their weapons at his men. He had been forced to act, or explain the loss of someone to a loved one. No, he performed his duty to the letter.

Just as Johnson raises his fingers to his ear to warn Byrne he is interrupted by Byrne himself.

"Johnson! ET's are hostile, I repeat hostile!" shouts Byrne as he is firing at his targets.

"Confirmed" replies Johnson.

"Sarge!?" shouts a Marine.

Johnson turns to see where the Marine is pointing, only to see the smoke cleared and a lot more ET's aiming in his direction.

"Hostiles!" declares Johnson as he shoulders his battle rifle once again, aiming down his scope at an aliens face. Pulling the trigger it explodes into a pulpy purple mess.

His men follow suit, suppressing the enemy with short controlled bursts. The aliens return fire with semi-automatic weapons of some kind. Their rifles producing a notable green flash alongside a green trail where the projectile has travelled. They impact and are deflected by the soldiers kinetic barriers.

Johnson peeks out of his cover to see the aliens tap at their wrist

and a shield of some sort flashes into existence from it. Placing their rifles on their backs they use a side-arm from a slit at the side of the shield to fore from cover, which they can move at will.

"Suppressing fire!" shouts Houldey as he pops out of cover before his shields have recharged.

Within moments he is downed as the aliens snap at him and open fire rapidly. Their projectiles burning through portions of his armour with a hiss. Subconsciously, Johnson takes note that the first soldier to die in this confrontation is under his command.

Unfortunately, that soldier would not be the last.

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**UNSC Training Grounds**

In the recent decades, the UNSC has made use of advanced VI systems and a series of Kinetic Barriers and concussive rounds to provide battle simulations as close to the real experience as possible. The battle is observed either by an AI or a series of VI's which monitor each individuals armour which is set to take a certain amount of damage. Once this damage has been reached, the VI's or AI disables that soldiers weapons and boosts his/her Kinetic Barriers to allow them same passage off the exercise area.

No casualties have ever been recorded on these training grounds, further solidifying their usefulness in training.

****Authors Note:** **Hello again. Well, I'm glad to say I am enjoying writing this story so far. I'm still working up to the part which no other author seems to have wrote or implemented yet and I'll give you a clue.

It has something to do with the Covenant.

Even if you guess right, I won't let you know until I confirm it in a chapter for you, but I would like to see what you think it is and what you thought of this chapter.

Thank you and until next chapter ;)

End
file.